

## SUB-SECTION 3: Consumer Education Subgroup

In Phase I of the CLI, research findings, literature review summaries, and Stakeholder comments indicated that many consumers do not consistently or thoroughly read or use the labels of indoor insecticides, outdoor pesticides, and household cleaning products. For this reason, changes to label information or design will not lead to significant benefits to consumer knowledge, understanding, or health and safety—unless consumers first *read* the labels.

Consumers have also stated in a variety of research arenas that they do not understand much of the content of many of these product labels. In addition—and more importantly from the point of consumer education—they have expressed that they often do not feel motivated to read the labels, because they see little personal benefit in doing so.

### ***Overview and Goals of the Consumer Education Campaign***

A primary goal of the Consumer Education Campaign is to increase consumer awareness of label information on a national level. Reaching consumers nationwide can represent a major commitment of time and resources. The CLI benefits greatly from equal involvement of a variety of participants, many of whom have the ability and willingness to help produce and disseminate consumer education materials. The campaign thus involves and encourages the participation of many organizations that represent avenues for reaching consumers directly, such as:

- # CLI Partners' organizations;
- # state and local government agencies;
- # non-profit organizations;
- # schools, libraries, and civic groups; and
- # local media, such as newspapers, magazines, radio, and cable channels.

Such broad participation by many organizations greatly increases the possibilities for exposing consumers to repeated messages, and thus increases the success of the campaign.

The CLI's goals included:

- # improving product labels so that they would be easier for consumers to understand;
- # helping consumers to become more aware of product labels and the information they contain;
- # helping consumers to feel more motivated to read and understand label information;
- # giving consumers better tools for understanding label information; and

- # encouraging consumers to more consistently and more thoroughly read labels of these products, prior to purchase, use, storage, and disposal.

To address these goals, the CLI established a Consumer Education Subgroup in Phase II, to encourage safe and environmentally responsible behavior by consumers regarding indoor insecticides, outdoor pesticides, and household cleaning products. This group included more than 20 participants, representing organizations that have an interest in consumer education issues related to product labeling. Various businesses, state agencies, non-profit organizations, other organizations, and EPA staff members are represented. The group was expanded according to the recommendation presented by the Phase II research, to include marketing, brand, outreach, education, and public relations experts. The complete list of participants can be found in Appendix 1-9.

The CLI was initiated to identify ways to:

- # increase reading and use of labels;
- # decrease the misuse of products;
- # decrease the incidence of accidents involving products; and
- # decrease environmental impacts caused by improper storage and disposal.